

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the present application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 - 4 (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The implicit function rendering method ~~according to claim 4 of a nonmanifold~~, characterized in that:

(1) an input nonmanifold curved surface is divided along a branch line, broken down into curved surface patches having no branches;

(2) numbers  $i$  are allocated to the patches in an obtained order, a ~~front-front~~ and a back of each patch are distinguished from each other, a number  $i^+$  is given to the front, and a number  $i^-$  is given to the back;

(3) a space is sampled by a lattice point  $p_r$ ; and

Euclid distance  $d_E(p)$  to the curved surface and number  $i(p)$  of a surface of a nearest point are allocated to the lattice point;

(4) for each lattice point  $p$ ,  $i(p_n)$  is ~~investigated~~ determined at six adjacent points  $p_n$ , and groups of  $(i(p), i(p_n))$  where  $i(p) \neq i(p_n)$  are enumerated;

(5) a group of new numbers are substituted for the group of numbers ~~prepared~~ allocated above, but if the numbers which are first  $i^+$  and  $i^-$  become the same numbers as a result of the substitution, no substitution is carried out for a combination thereof, whereby numbers are arrayed in order from 0 ~~at the end~~ after said substitution; and

(6) in accordance with a substitution table, a region number  $i(p)$  is rewritten at each lattice point  $p$ , and an implicit ~~function~~ volume function of a real value is ~~constituted~~ comprised of the obtained volume region number  $i(p)$  and the Euclid distance  $d_E(p)$  to the surface at each voxel, wherein

$$d_E = \sqrt{(x - X)^2 + (y - Y)^2 + (z - Z)^2}$$

where the coordinate (x, y, z) is a lattice point, and the coordinate (X, Y, Z) is the point closest to a curved surface from the lattice point.

6. (Currently Amended) The implicit function rendering method according to claim 45, characterized in that:

a distance  $d_s^i$  included in a distance  $i$  is as follows:

$$d_s^i \in [D_s i, D_s(i+1)) \dots (6)$$

wherein  $D_s$  is a width of each divided region of a real valued space representing a distance; and

in a position  $p$  of each voxel, a region distance  $f_s(p)$  is calculated from  $d_E(p)$  and  $i(p)$  by the following equation:

$$f_s(p) = \min(d_E, 2^{B-\epsilon}) + 2^B i(p) \dots (7),$$

$\epsilon(>0)$  is set to a minute positive real number to round down  $d_E(p)$  so that  $f_s(p)$  can be included in a half-open section of (6).

7. (Currently Amended) The implicit function rendering method according to claim 45, characterized in that:

only when the followings are all satisfied,

$$u \in (2^B i, 2^B(i+1)) \dots (8)$$

$$v \in [2^B j, 2^B(j+1)) \dots (9)$$

$$0 < (u - 2^B i) + (v - 2^B j) < \alpha w \dots (10)$$

but  $i, j$  ( $0 \leq i \leq j \leq n-1$ ),  $\alpha (\geq 1)$ ,

wherein  $w$  is a space between two optional sample points; and  $u$  and  $v$  ( $u \leq v$ ) are values, respectively, there is a surface between these two points

wherein with respect to two sample points A and B, the designations  $i, j, u, v, n$ , and  $\alpha$  are defined as follows

$i$  = region number of the point A,

$j$  = region number of the point B,

$u$  = region distance of the point A,

$v$  = region distance of the point B,

$n$  = total number of regions in which the region code distance is defined,

$\alpha$  = a parameter that makes it possible to generate a curved surface between the points A and B, even if the curved surface exists between the points A and B , and the points closest to the curved surface do no conform to each other, and

wherein  $2^B$  is a range of permissible region distance values in one dimension.

8. (Currently Amended) The implicit function rendering method according to claim 45, characterized in that:

a surface position  $q$  ( $\in [0, 1]$ ) is normalized so that a value can be on a lattice point of  $u$  when  $q=0$  and can be on a lattice point of  $v$  when  $q=1$ ; and the position  $q$  where there is a surface is obtained by the following equation:

$$q=(u-2^B i)/((u-2^B i)+(v-2^B j)) \dots (11),$$

wherein  $2^B$  is a range of permissible region distance values in one dimension.

Claims 9 - 17 (Canceled)